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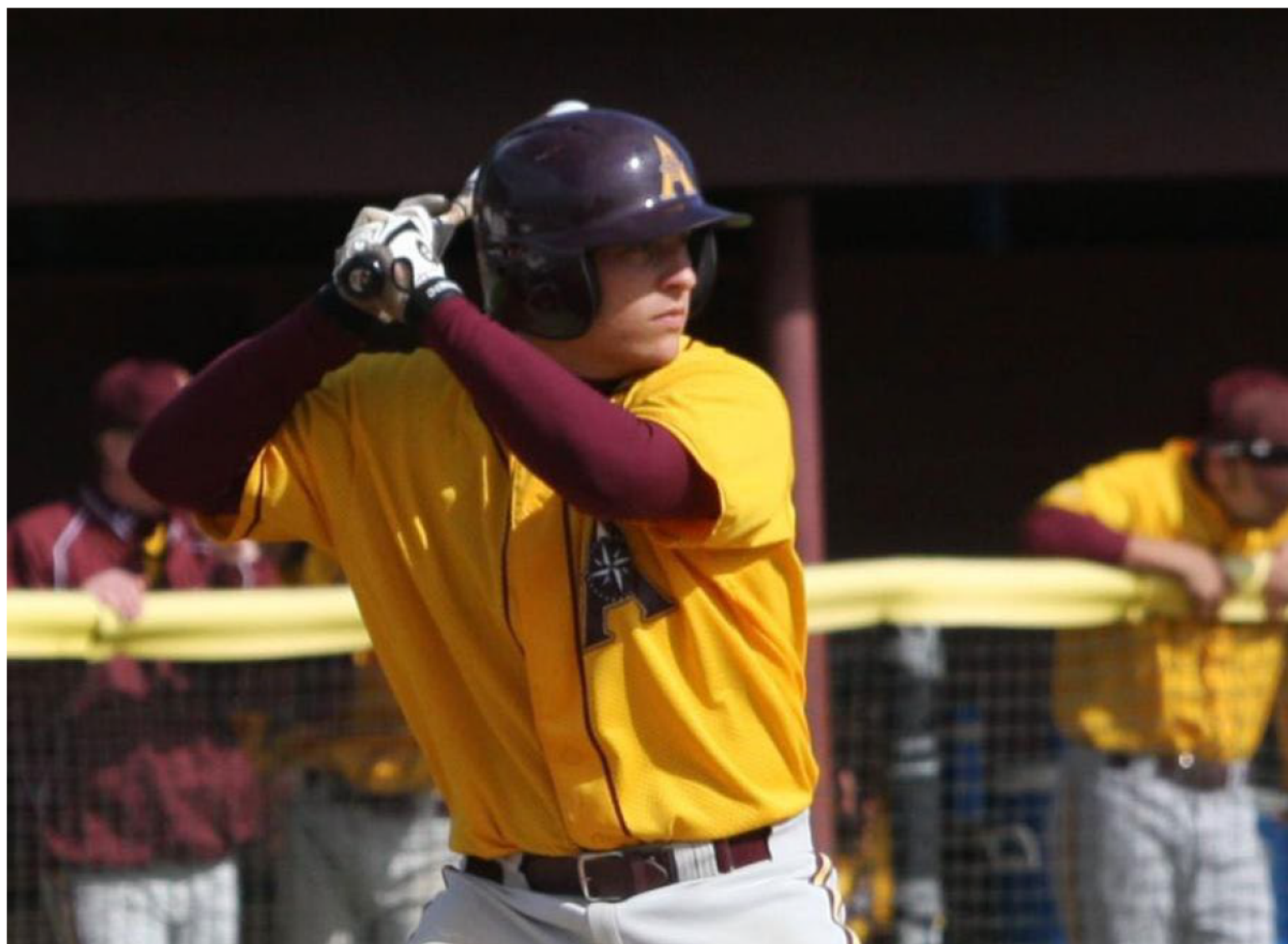
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BASEBALL

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No. 13 FMU Downs No. 20 Pirates, 5-3, In PBC Opener





Posted: Mar 12, 2011

FLORENCE, S.C. - No. 13-ranked Francis Marion jumped out to a two-run lead and held on for a 5-3 Peach Belt Conference baseball victory over visiting No. 20-ranked Armstrong Atlantic State University on Saturday afternoon in Florence, S.C.

Francis Marion improves to 16-6 overall and 3-1 in the PBC, while Armstrong falls to 16-4 and 0-1 in the league in its PBC opener.

The Patriots jumped out to a quick 1-0 lead in the bottom of the first inning on a two-out RBI single by Preston Shuey, then extended that lead to 2-0 in the fourth inning on a two-out RBI double by Brian Paulhus.

Francis Marion starter Don Sandifer (5-1) held the Pirates hitless until the fifth inning when Drew Walker led off with a single, then back-to-back two-out hits by Mike Barnhill and Josh Purvis plated Walker with the first Pirate run of the game, making the score 2-1. The run ended a string of 38.2 consecutive innings without giving up an earned run by Sandifer.

A Tyler Cappelman RBI single pushed the lead back to two, 3-1, in the sixth for FMU, then each team traded two-run home runs for the final margin - a two-run blast by Shuey for the Patriots in the seventh, then a two-run home run by the Pirates' **John Roberts** in the top of the eighth cut the lead back to two, 5-3.

Sandifer retired the Pirates in order in the ninth to preserve the victory for FMU. He gave up eight hits and struck out 10, walking none for his fifth straight victory.

Chandler Hall (4-1) suffered his first loss of the season for the Pirates in a complete-game effort, giving up nine hits and five runs - four earned - while walking one and striking out two.

Roberts, Walker and Barnhill each had two hits apiece for the Pirates, while Shuey had two hits and drove in three to lead the Patriots.

The two teams will wrap up their three-game Peach Belt series with a doubleheader on Sunday beginning at 1:00 p.m.



ARMSTRONG STATE UNIVERSITY

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